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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 4, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

POLLUTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are used to a world with gloomy news regarding the jarring impact and threats of climate change.

We are experiencing wildfires in the Pacific Northwest this winter. The snowpack is a small percentage of normal, which is not just bad news for skiers now; it means lower river levels in the spring that will affect hydropower production, irrigation for farmers, and

further damage to ever-troubled fish runs. California is experiencing its worst drought in 500 years—not really manmade, as some of my Republican California colleagues claim. Although it is interesting, as pointed out in the L.A. Times yesterday in an editorial: “Funny, isn’t it, that folks who question man’s ability to affect the global climate are so quick to assign human causes to the drought?”

There are severe strains on the Colorado River Basin, and 40 million people are heavily dependent on that water throughout the Southwest. Last week, we heard about the massive penguin die-off due to changing weather patterns. Of course we have been experiencing the polar vortex and wild weather this winter.

With all these bad signs, it was interesting to see a positive message emerge yesterday on the front page of The Washington Post about air pollution in China. To be sure, Chinese pollution still threatens, producing the most carbon emissions on the planet, which portend far worse climate problems in the future for everyone. It causes 1 million premature deaths a year in China and, in fact, threatens the health of west coast Americans, as we regularly breathe Chinese pollution that blows across the ocean.

It is encouraging that China is taking steps to acknowledge the problem, to track and publicize the severe pollution levels when, 5 years ago, they asked the United States Embassy in Beijing to stop publishing that same embarrassing data.

Now the Chinese Government is publishing the information itself and is even ranking the worst offenders. The 10 most polluted Chinese cities have air quality levels 6 to 10 times the pollution of the 10 worst American cities. The Chinese are providing realtime disclosure of pollution that is more ambitious than anything the United States did in the EPA’s highly successful

toxic release inventory that dates back almost 30 years.

It is absolutely critical that China acknowledge the problem and hold people accountable for the pollution, but it is even better news that the Chinese are going beyond mere data collection, as they unveiled a \$280 billion plan to improve air quality, including limiting coal use and banning high pollution vehicles.

Isn’t it ironic that the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives is determined to prevent the United States EPA from taking the next steps to clean up our dirty coal plants and protect us from the carbon pollution that is causing such climate disruption, all the while denying the science.

One hopes that the United States will come to its senses while it appears the Chinese are starting to come around. The future of the planet for our children and grandchildren depends upon it.

ALEXANDER MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize Alexander Montessori School for 50 years of providing exceptional educational opportunities for generations of children in south Florida.

Fifty years ago, Beverly McGhee founded Alexander Day School in honor of her parents, Alice and Henry Alexander, in order to provide an early childhood facility for her two children. From the outset, her school has enjoyed a reputation as a place where kids wanted to learn and where the staff and teachers cared about what they did.

Within a few years of the school’s founding, Beverly became aware of

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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